




KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

	INTERNAL MANAGEMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE	SECTION NUMBER 08-101	PAGE NUMBER 1 of 4
		SUBJECT: COMMUNICATION: Public Information Program	
Approved By:  Secretary of Corrections		Original Date Issued: 08-15-93	Current Amendment Effective: 07-28-06
		Replaces Amendment Issued: 12-21-03	
Reissued By:  Policy & Procedure Coordinator		The substantive content of this IMPP has been reissued as per the appropriate provisions of IMPP 01-101. The only modifications within the reissue of this document concern technical revisions of a non substantive nature. Date Reissued: 08-12-11	

POLICY

The Department shall establish a Public Information Program to actively and constructively work with other components of the criminal justice system and the news media, (ACO 2-1A-27) and to inform and educate the public of special events, issues, policies, and procedures within the Department. (ACI 3-4021; APPFS 3-3027) The public information program shall be annually reviewed to determine its effectiveness in implementing this policy and the program shall be updated as necessary. (ACO 2-1A-25)

A Public Information Manager shall serve as the primary spokesperson for the Department and shall be responsible for developing and maintaining the Departmental information program. At each facility, a public information officer shall be designated by the warden to respond to routine requests for information and serve as spokesperson for the facility. Within each parole region, routine request for information shall be directed to the parole director who shall serve as the public information officer and spokesperson for the parole region. (ACO 2-1A-27-1; ACI 3-4021-1; APPFS 3-3028)

All requests submitted referencing the Kansas Open Records Act or the Freedom of Information Act shall be immediately forwarded by facsimile transmission to the Freedom of Information Officer in Central Office.

Inquiries from other agencies, officials, the media or the general public regarding operations or specific offenders shall receive an accurate and timely response (ACO 2-1A-26) with due regard for confidentiality statutes and regulations. All requests regarding emergency situations affecting a departmental office or facility shall be referred to the KDOC Public Information Manager or the appropriate public information Officer. Approved news releases and other information regarding special events and incidents of special interest shall be disseminated to the media in a timely and controlled manner with such limitations as necessary to preserve the security and operations of departmental facilities and privacy considerations of staff and offenders. (ACO 2-1A-27-01; ACI 3-4021-1; APPFS 3-3028)

DEFINITIONS

Freedom of Information Officer: An employee appointed by the Secretary of Corrections and responsible for: preparing educational materials, brochures, and information concerning the Open Records Act; responding to inquiries relating to the Open Records Act; and assisting with resolving disputes relating to Open Records Act requests.

Public Information Officer: An individual assigned the responsibility to coordinate a public information program of a facility or parole region.

Public Information Manager: The Central Office designee responsible for the overall administration of the Department's public information program.

PROCEDURES

I. Responsibilities of the Public Information Manager

- A. The Department's Public Information Manager shall be responsible for:
 - 1. Establishment and maintenance of guidelines identifying which types of information requests should be responded to by the Public Information Officer and which should be responded to by the public information coordinator;
 - 2. Support and consultation for public information coordinators;
 - 3. Preparation and distribution of a monthly departmental newsletter and news releases approved by the Secretary or designee;
 - 4. Initiation and maintenance of contacts with statewide media representatives; and,
 - 5. Response to all media inquiries received in the Central Office.

II. Designation of Public Information Officers (ACI 3-4021-1; APPFS 3-3028)

- A. Each warden/parole director shall designate a public information Officer for their respective facility or parole region, and provide the Public Information Manager the name of the person so designated.
- B. Any changes in personnel designated as public information officer shall be reported to the Public Information Manager within ten (10) working days of the change.

III. Duties of the Public Information Officer

- A. The public information officer shall be responsible for:
 - 1. Initiation and maintenance of contacts with local media representatives;
 - 2. Initial review and screening of all written or verbal requests for information from the media received within the facility or parole region;
 - 3. Preparation and distribution of news releases approved by the warden or designee;
 - 4. Response to all routine requests for information from the media received within the facility or parole region; and, (ACO 2-1A-27-1; ACI 3-4021-1; APPFS 3-3028)
 - 5. Overall coordination of the facility's or parole region's public information system.

IV. Responses to Requests for Routine Information

- A. Requests from Federal, State, and local legislators for information about operations or specific offenders shall normally be responded to within three (3) working days of receipt of the request. (ACO 2-1A-26; ACI 3-4020)
 - 1. Media access to facilities and/or offices shall be in accordance with provisions of IMPP 08-104.

- B. Information provided to the Legislature, media, or general public shall be in accordance with IMPP 05-101 and all applicable confidentiality statutes. (ACI 2-1A-27-1; ACI 3-4021-1)

V. Responses to Requests for Information Under the Kansas Open Records Act

- A. All requests for information relative to the Kansas Open Records Act shall be submitted to the designated KDOC Freedom of Information Officer in Central Office.

VI. Responses to Requests for Emergency Information

- A. All Departmental staff receiving inquiries or media requests for information regarding an emergency situation shall refer the inquiry/request to the appropriate public information officer or the KDOC Public Information Manager.
- B. Media contacts, pre-scheduled news conferences and news releases concerning emergency situations shall be in accordance with provisions of Emergency Plans, per IMPP 19-101.
 - 1. Media access to facilities and/or offices during an emergency situation shall be in accordance with IMPP 08-104.
- C. All news releases regarding emergencies shall be reviewed and approved by the Secretary or designee and the Chief Legal Counsel if the emergency has system-wide impact, or as determined appropriate by the Secretary:
 - 1. The deputy secretary responsible for a specific area of departmental operations and the Chief Legal Counsel; or,
 - 2. The warden and facility legal counsel when the emergency situation is local.
- D. The Public Information Manager and/or the public information officer shall verify the accuracy of information and coordinate all releases of information consistent with concerns for privacy of staff and inmates, and the interest of safety and secure operations of the office or facility involved in the emergency.

VII. Special Events Coverage (ACI 3-4021-1; APPFS 3-3028)

- A. The Public Information Manager and public information officers shall provide advance information and invitations to the news media, local and State legislators and the public of events sponsored by the Department of Corrections, its facilities or offices.

VIII. Annual Review of the Public Information Program (ACO 2-1A-25)

- A. The Secretary of Corrections or designee shall annually evaluate the effectiveness of the Public Information Program through a review of:
 - 1. News releases;
 - 2. News clippings from newspapers throughout the state as provided by news services, and/or departmental staff; and,
 - 3. Correspondence and/or verbal comments received by the Secretary or other KDOC staff.
- B. The Public Information Manager shall be responsible to update the Public Information Program as determined necessary following the annual review, or at anytime adjustments to the program are deemed necessary.

NOTE: The policy and procedures set forth herein are intended to establish directives and guidelines for staff and offenders and those entities that are contractually bound to adhere to them. They are not intended to establish State created liberty interests for employees or offenders, or an independent duty owed by the Department of Corrections to employees, offenders, or third parties. Similarly, those references to the standards of various accrediting entities as may be contained within this document are included solely to manifest the commonality of purpose and direction as shared by the content of the document and the content of the referenced standards. Any such references within this document neither imply accredited status by a Departmental facility or organizational unit, nor indicate compliance with the standards so cited. The policy and procedures contained within this document are intended to be compliant with all applicable statutes and/or regulatory requirements of the Federal Government and the state of Kansas. This policy and procedure is not intended to establish or create new constitutional rights or to enlarge or expand upon existing constitutional rights or duties.

REPORTS REQUIRED

None.

REFERENCES

K.A.R. 44-1-103
IMPP 05-101, 08-104, 19-101
ACO 2-1A-25, 2-1A-26, 2-1A-27, 2-1A-27-1
ACI 3-4020, 3-4021, 3-4021-1
APPFS 3-3027, 3-3028

ATTACHMENTS

None.